

Led Canadian Farmers to Success

By EDWARD W. THOMSON

HON. T. A. CRERAR appears to me as more likely to be Premier of Canada after the next general federal election than any other man now visible above the political horizon. It would not have been accurate for me to have written "than any other candidate for the Premiership." He is not a seeker after office; he never was such. He has been, ever since boyhood, one of the rare practical idealists who strive to get done those things which they see to be right, wise, profitable to and altogether good for their fellow men. Because his neighbors and acquaintances have understood that he not only knows what ought to be done but how to get it done they have insisted on putting him into various responsible and ever higher and higher positions. Take a steady look at his photograph. Then you will probably understand why plain people have implicit confidence in the good faith, brains, honor, modesty, unselfishness of T. A. Crerar.

Last year he resigned from Sir Robert Borden's Coalition Ministry, in which he had been Minister of Agriculture since the fall of 1917. He had no sort of quarrel with Sir Robert nor with any other colleague. He resigned because the end of the war had left him free to resume his presidency of the United Grain-growers Association. That is an amazingly efficient and prosperous organization of West-Canada's farmers, who demand such reforms of federal taxation as will at once relieve our producers of "naturals" from plunder by Big Interests and promote reciprocity in exchange of commodities with our neighbors of the Republic. Borden's Cabinet stood by that variety of customs-taxation which Crerar has ever striven to reduce or abolish. He had sacrificed much in convenience and money, but not one jot of his truly liberal principles, in accepting Cabinet rank, solely that Canadians might, in the general election of 1917, show a united front in prosecuting the Great War.

Mr. Crerar has had what may be reasonably defined as the best of all possible educations for a statesman. He was a farm-bred boy. In 1897 he was teaching a rural school in Manitoba for ten dollars a month. This was boosted to \$35 in 1899, after he had acquired some Latin by attending a session of the Manitoba University, Winnipeg. Then he was twenty-three years old.

Says the historian of the United Grain-growers Association, Mr. Hopkins Moorhouse, in that instructive book, "Deep Furrows," "But milking cows at home night and morning and teaching school in between was not an exciting life at best for a young fellow ambitious to go farming. So he acquired a quarter section of Hudson Bay Company land near Russell, and took to 'batching it' in a little frame shack." Soon afterward he procured and worked a share in a portable sawmill; ran it four winters, took great interest in the local

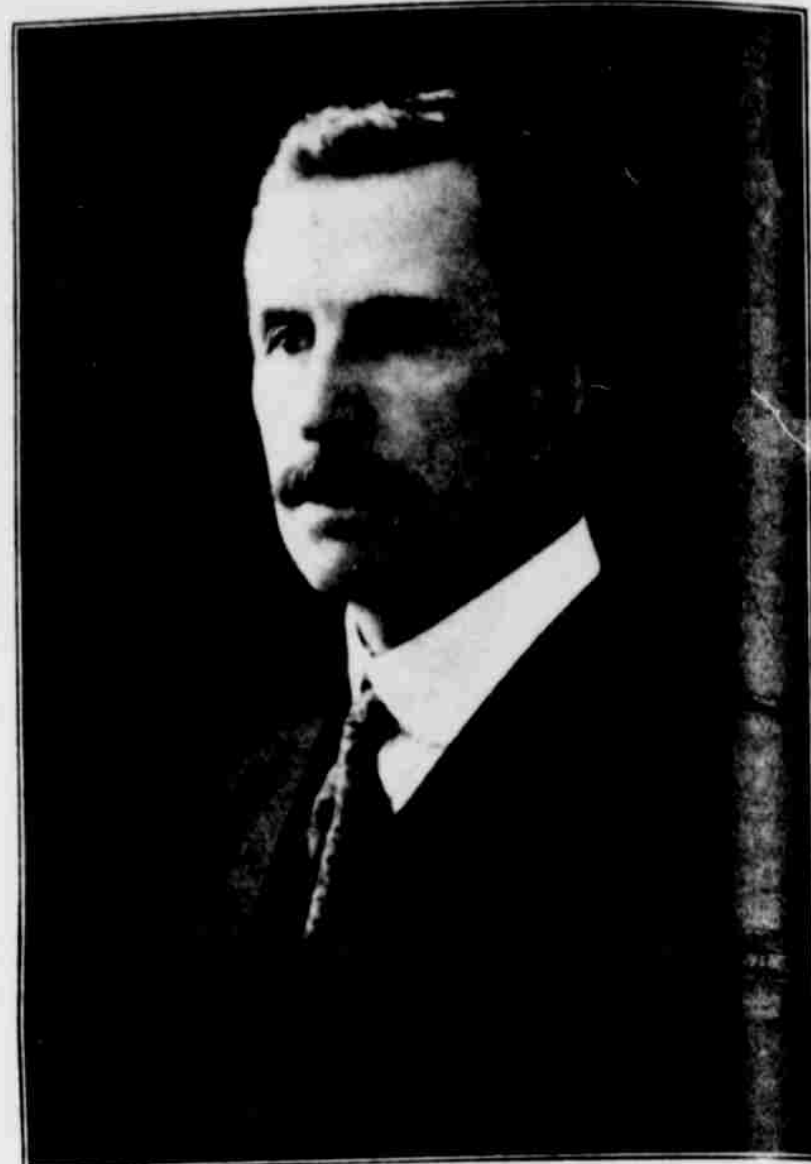
Farmers' Co-operative Trading Society, pushed it against tremendous odds and angry, profiteering traders, became manager of a Farmers' Grain Elevator in Russell, after having had sad experiences with other elevator men on his own wheat crop. Now he had \$75 a month.

He so exerted himself in pushing the Grain-growers' interests throughout his own neighborhood that the shrewd committeemen soon took notice. Then they amazed, yea, shocked his modesty by electing him president of the Grain-growers' Society. That was sixteen years ago. Since then he and his mates have successfully downed all manner of almost frantic opposition by the Winnipeg Grain Exchange, sundry banks, many trader-profiteers.

Mr. Crerar has been and now is a member of the Ottawa Parliament, an ex-Minister, a steadfast agitator for orderly reforms in government, in taxation, in promotion of the great Producing Interests—Farming, Mining, Fishing, Lumbering. His chief occupation nowadays appears to be that of affiliating the whole body of Farmers throughout the Dominion on lines acceptable to the Mechanical classes in general. He has of late been addressing, always in plain, straight speeches, great audiences in the Maritime Provinces, Quebec and Ontario. Since the Order of United Farmers of the latter Province won last fall's general elections, and made Mr. Drury their Premier, all sorts of the intelligent everywhere in Canada are eager to hear and see the great Head Businessman of the all-Canada Farmers, T. A. Crerar, the prudent, the plain, the democratic, the man whom an Oxford-bred Scotchman described to me as "sound and good through and through." Which is precisely what I myself think of him after sundry most pleasant and fairly searching informal talks with him. If Canadians get him to take the Premiership they will be a lucky people.

Some sixteen years ago the West-Canada "Grain-growers Company" had a paid-up capital of eleven thousand dollars, of which seven thousand had gone in organization expenses. They were clever enough to do a grain trade of \$1,700,000 the first ten months. Last November the annual U. G. G. meeting in Winnipeg mustered 500 delegates, chosen by over 36,000 members resident in Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta and British Columbia. The paid-up capital was then \$2,415,000; the cash reserve fund was \$1,500,000. The company had handled 22,000,000 bushels of grain, a falling off, by reason of poorer crop, from the 29,000,000 dealt in the previous year, though the percentage of total crop handled by the company had increased.

By the Co-operative Supply Department more than six million dollars of sales were made last year to members. The Livestock Department handled 5,257 cars of cattle, hogs and sheep. The affiliated Export



T. A. CRERAR

Company had paid well, despite war difficulties. The U. G. G. publications, "The Grain-growers' Guide" and "The Public Press," had concluded an excellent financial year.

You may correctly infer, from the mere names of enterprises, that our Canadian farmers have learned how to transact a great variety of business for their own peculiar benefit. They extensively do their own profiteering. What a change from the times when urban folks thought of farmers as hayseeds! Their dividend on last year's business operations was six per cent, yet they had co-operatively obtained a great variety of supplies at considerably less than ordinary retail prices.

For these results a large number of very able business-headed farmers must be credited, though here they cannot be named. Really the most cheering thing of all is that not only so many farmers have displayed marked business faculty, but that their fellow-members have shown such horse-sense in trusting the able chaps, following their counsel, standing by them right through.

Now, when you find such a crowd as that electing the same man president of the United Grain-growers' year after year, you may safely reckon that that chosen man is at once exceedingly able and utterly trustworthy. Fact is, Mr. Crerar is a latter-day Abraham Lincoln. That was one of my own impressions on first meeting him—and, mind you, I saw Mr. Lincoln thrice, and once he spoke to me, thank the Lord! When we get our Young Abe into the Premiership at Ottawa, then the whole world may, not very improbably, turn to Canada for example of how to meet the vast problem of effecting generally beneficial reforms in a perfectly orderly and acceptable manner.

When the Census Is Taken in New York



(C) Keystone

TAKING the census in any large city is a polyglot business. Every large American city has representatives of nearly every race and tongue on earth, and the census-takers in the foreign districts must be selected with that fact in mind. The work would never be finished if one-language enumerators were employed. Another difficulty attending the census is the suspicion which immigrants have of every government undertaking. In their native lands they were so accustomed to their government seeking information as a basis for new oppressions in the way of taxes or new restrictions, that they often feel the United States also has an ulterior motive in its registrations and census. These misgivings make the work of the census taker rather difficult, and he earns the fee which the law allows him. There are 85,000 enumerators employed in the city of New York alone. The photograph shows the interest the census taker has aroused in the vicinity of a fish stand in Little Italy.

Asks Release of War Prisoners

SWITZERLAND has appealed to the Supreme Council at Paris for the release of the 430,000 German and Russian prisoners of war held by the French Government. Many of these prisoners have been away from home for five years. Fear is expressed by the French that the Russians may turn Bolshevik if released, but what would tend to make them Bolshevik more quickly than this continued imprisonment? Germans are being held to enforce exacting conditions on Germany. The encouragement of such feeling of hostility and revenge in a neighboring nation does not augur well for the future peace of the world.

A new method of illumination by which colors will show almost as well as in daylight has been invented in England. English scientists declare it to be nearest to daylight of any artificial illuminant.